

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 14, with the following amended paragraph:

In an embodiment of the invention, one type of optical identification element may be a two-dimensional high-resolution symbology code, e.g. of the so-called “~~Infoglyph~~TM”- “INFOGLYPHTM” type. The optical identification may also be more generically a two-dimensional symbology. Two-dimensional symbology may be representative of data including, but not limited to: tissue sample related data, patient identification data, staining protocol data, reagent related data, reagent type data, reagent volume related data, reagent durability related data, and the like data. By encoding the relevant information into numerous tiny, individual graphic elements, typically small lines in 45° diagonal lines as short as 0.02 mm (1/100 inch), a high resolution with high contrast encoded information label may be achieved which is printable in a printer and readable by a high resolution camera. The type of encoded 2-D symbology label may be provided in different colors and in a variety of materials.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 18, line 29, with the following amended paragraph:

As shown in fig. 4, the reagent bottle 3 may be provided with an area 30 on a surface on which to mount an optical identification element. This optical identifier may be an adhesive label 31 carrying encoded information about the content of the bottle 3, such as reagent type, date of manufacture, expiry date, etc. The encoded information

could be in the form of a data matrix code, an ~~Infoglyph~~ INFOGLYPH™ code or any other kind of 2-D code, and could in principle also be a simple 1-D code, i.e. a bar code. Additionally, the label 31 may also be provided with human readable text to aid the operator handling the reagent bottles e.g. during loading of bottles into the staining apparatus.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 19, line 24, with the following amended paragraph:

In fig. 7, an example of a 2-D symbology of the ~~Infoglyph~~ INFOGLYPH™ type is shown. This may include perhaps even an information carpet type of symbology. This type of 2-D symbology is advantageous since it can carry a large amount of optically machine-readable information. Making use of a high-resolution camera, this type of symbology may be readable in a high resolution and a large amount of information can be encoded therein. The symbology may be printed with tiny diagonal lines in different directions or perhaps even colors and can easily be read by a CCD camera or the like.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 20, line 4, with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 8 shows an example of a data matrix code that can be used as an alternative to the ~~Infoglyph~~ INFOGLYPH™ symbology. The data matrix is similarly readable with a CCD camera but may not carry as many data in the encoding as the ~~Infoglyph~~ INFOGLYPH™. However, it is easier to print as it may have a less high resolution

making it a simple and cost effective solution if less identification data on the slides and the reagent bottles is required. A yet simpler solution is shown in fig. 9, where the symbology is the old bar code. In principle this means that only a bar code scanner is required for reading the slides and the reagent bottle information, but by using a 2-D sensor, the possibility of self-calibration and monitoring the installation of slides and reagents in the staining apparatus may be enhanced.